

4 JUN 1984

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director for Intelligence

FROM:

Executive Director

SUBJECT: Data Base Support for Surge Requirements

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1. One of the four goals emphasized in the 1984 Addendum to the Strategic Plan involves strengthening our surge capability. The goal was described as follows in the Addendum: "To ensure that we can react rapidly and effectively to hotspot crisis or contingency situations in areas not covered in depth by the Intelligence Community." The Addendum calls for a study by the four Directorates, jointly managed by you and the DDO, to identify needed improvements in the Community's surge capability and to determine which of them should be addressed at the Community level and which we should handle ourselves. The study should be completed by October.

2. Adequate data base support is indispensable to an effective surge capability. As the Addendum notes, we must be able to exploit quickly what we know so that we can identify and collect only against what we need to know in rapidly breaking situations. The need for such data base support has been a recurring theme, both at conferences last August and December and in budget and planning iterations before and after those sessions.

3. From what was said at the December Conference, your Third World data base project is the most ambitious existing undertaking in this area in the Community. Given the semi-experimental nature of the project, the experience you have gained from developmental activities with it thus far, and the tie-in with the study called for in the Addendum to the Agency's Strategic Plan, I wonder if now might be a good time to revisit -- as an Agency -- the scope of activities such a data base should support.

4. I was thinking of devoting one of our Friday morning sessions to the data base issue, but I would appreciate your views before notifying the other Deputies. The attached list of questions outlines some of the areas I believe we could profitably address. I also would appreciate your comments on the questions and any additions or deletions you might suggest.

Attachment

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Questions on Data Base Support for Surge Requirements

The terms "encyclopedic data base" and "surge capability" became popular in the wake of the Community's 1985 Intelligence Capabilities Study which was published in October 1981 and reaffirmed in October 1983. The study defined the data base need as follows:

Comprehensive, Worldwide Intelligence Foundation:
Data Base and Analytic Capability

In order to ensure the U.S. a capability to anticipate and respond to major contingency situations throughout the world, particularly in geographic areas not normally of major interest to the U.S., an intelligence foundation is required worldwide to permit rapid and knowledgeable augmentation in the event of a crisis involving U.S. interests. This encyclopedic data base must be sufficiently comprehensive to provide U.S. policy-makers initial current intelligence and accurate estimates on the political, economic, societal, geographic, scientific and technological, and military characteristics and capabilities of the country and its changing alliances and inter-dependencies; it should be of sufficient scope and depth that additional intelligence resources can be targeted against the area rapidly and effectively.

Is the above definition still valid?

If so, what does this mean in terms of new or modified automated and manual data bases from CIA's perspective?

Should we be considering a Directorate-wide, Agency-wide, or Community-wide approach to the problem?

Should the Third World data base project support only analysis, or should it be geared to provide operational support as well in the sense of serving DO, OSO, and DoD, for example, or for facilitating the retargeting of overhead systems? (A data base system to support operational planning would probably be vastly different from one for analytic support.)

Should it be tailored to support only crises or surge needs, or should it be a general support mechanism containing everything we know about the area?

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Should it incorporate only those areas we consciously decide not to cover in depth (are there many of these, given Agency growth)?

Depending on the answers to the above:

What is the appropriate scope and level of detail of the data content?

How and by whom will the data base(s) be maintained, and what resources will be required?

How will our overall approach to data base development be affected?

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